

## BENEFITS OF BRINGING A VACANT HOME BACK TO USE

- Increase the capital value of your property
- Long term investment potential of a properly maintained dwelling
- Increased sales potential
- Property secured from vandalism/anti-social behaviour
- Provision of homes to those in need of housing
- Reduce pressure for new housing developments
- Removes blight in local community



Vacant property before renovation



Vacant property after renovation

## What are my options?

### Repair & Lease Scheme

The Repair & Lease Scheme (RLS) is intended for owners of vacant homes in town and villages, who cannot afford, or access, the finance required to bring vacant properties up to the standard required for rental.

Owners of houses/apartments or bedsits that have been vacant for a year or more and which need repairs to bring the property to the required

standard for rented properties can express an interest in the scheme with their local authority. If a property requires repairs, Clare County Council or an Approved Housing Body (AHB) will pay for repair work upfront to a max of €60,000. In return the property must be made available for social housing for a period of at least 5 years under a direct lease or a Rental Availability Agreement (RAA).

### Buy & Renew Scheme

The Buy and Renew Scheme is a companion to the Repair and Lease Scheme, as it provides the option for suitable properties to be purchased rather than leased by a local authority. In essence you would be selling your home to Clare County Council. A particular focus of the scheme is on older vacant homes to help tackle the problem of dereliction and improve the appearance of the community.

### Long Term Leasing

The Long Term Leasing initiative may be an option for you if you own a house or apartment in an urban location, that is vacant and in good condition. Leasing your property under this scheme takes the uncertainty out of being a landlord for terms of 10-20 years. It is also financially viable with a guaranteed rental income of 80-85% of the market rent each month. Some of the benefits to the owner of this option are;

- No management of tenants
- No rent or arrears collections
- No day-to-day maintenance of the property
- No advertising or administration fees

### Exempted Development

New planning regulations have been introduced recently which allow change

of use, and related works, of certain vacant commercial premises, including “over the shop” type spaces, into residential use without the need to obtain planning permission. If you own a vacant commercial/over the shop premises and are interested in knowing more, you should contact the Vacant Homes Officer in Clare County Council.

### Housing Assistance Payment

Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) is a form of social housing support provided to those who qualify for assistance and have long-term housing need. Under the scheme, payments are made on behalf of tenants directly to the landlord subject to maximum rent limits. Benefits of HAP as an owner of a property are:

- Direct electronic payment monthly
- 100% tax relief on mortgage interest, as an expense against rental income.

### Better Energy Home Grants

Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland (SEAI) provides Better Energy Home grants to help homeowners and landlords reduce their energy costs and emissions by providing grants towards insulation, heating control and solar thermal improvements on homes occupied and built before 2006. Further details on grants payments, and qualifying works are available from the SEAI website at [www.seai.ie](http://www.seai.ie)



### KNOW OF A VACANT PROPERTY?

If you are aware of a vacant property in your area that may be suitable for social housing, please make Clare County Council aware and they will investigate if it is possible to bring the house back into use. You can submit details at [www.vacanthomes.ie](http://www.vacanthomes.ie)

#### Who should I contact?

If you would like further information on any of the options above, you can contact the Vacant Homes Officer in Clare County Council.

☎ 065 6846221/065 6821616

✉ [vacanthomes@clarecoco.ie](mailto:vacanthomes@clarecoco.ie)

🌐 [www.clarecoco.ie](http://www.clarecoco.ie)



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CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Are you the owner of a vacant property?



When you own a vacant home it can be difficult to work out the options that are open to you to bring it back to use. Clare County Council has a Vacant Homes Officer who is there to give advice, assistance and can work with you every step of the way in bringing your property back to use.

  
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